

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAJ-01 SAM-01 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /082 W

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R 171924Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1351

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLAB, FR, PO

SUBJECT: FO LEADERS ON THEIR VISIT TO LISBON

SUMMARY: FO LEADERS WHO VISITED LISBON 7-10 JULY DESCRIBED FOR PRESS AND LABATT COMMUNIST TACTICS TO MAINTAIN CONTROL OF UNIONS AND SAID THEY WERE IMPRESSED BY SOARES' INTELLIGENCE, INTEGRITY AND APPEAL TO PORTUGUESE WORKERS, BUT FOUND HIM RATHER PESSIMISTIC ABOUT FUTURE. END SUMMARY.

1. ANTOINE LAVAL, HEAD OF FO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND MARC BLONDEL, SECRETARY GENERAL OF OF COMMERCIAL EMPLOYEES FEDERATION, VISITED LISBON 7-10 JULY. FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY OF IMPRESSIONS GATHERED BY THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TWO FO LEADERS AS REPORTED IN PRESS CONFERENCE 15 JULY AND LONG CONVERSATION WITH LABATT. THEIR TRADE UNION CONTACTS WERE BASICALLY WITH UNIONS OF WORKERS IN BANKS, INSURANCE, METAL INDUSTRY AND TAP:

(A) TACTICAL RESOURCEFULNESS WITH WHICH COMMUNISTS ARE SEEKING TO MAINTAIN OR OBTAIN CONTROL OF INDIVIDUAL LABOR UNIONS IS DEPRESSING. THEY CITED SPECIFICALLY FOLLOWING PCP TECHNIQUES TO PREVENT NORMAL FUNCTIONING OF DEMOCRATIC RULES: MEETINGS ARE CALLED AT DISTANT POINTS WHICH ARE NOT READILY ACCESSIBLE, OR AT TWO DIFFERENT PLACES TO CAUSE CONFUSION; MEETINGS BEGIN WITH AN HOUR OR TWO DELAY AND ARE ARTIFICIALLY PROLONGED FOR UP TO 7 AND 10 HOURS TO WEAR OUT THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES; EXPLICIT THREATS OF IMPRISONMENT ARE USED AGAINST THOSE UNWILLING TO GO ALONG; COMMUNIST PROPOSALS ARE PRESENTED AS THE ONLY LEGALLY AUTHORIZED SOLUTIONS.

(B) THE ISSUE ON WHICH THE LINES ARE DRAWN BETWEEN THE COMMUNIST AND THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES IS THE CONSTITUTION TO BE ADOPTED BY EACH UNION TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE LABOR LAW. THE COMMUNIST MODEL IS CHALLENGED BY A DEMOCRATIC TEXT.

(C) BOTH FO LEADERS GAVE SOCIALIST LEADER SOARES VERY HIGH MARKS FOR INTELLIGENCE, COURAGE, RAPPORT WITH WORKING CLASS AND INTEGRITY. THE TWO-HOUR DISCUSSION WITH SOARES CONVINCED THEM THAT THE PSP LEADER IS DETERMINED TO FIGHT TO THE END FOR DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL FREEDOM BUT IS RATHER PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE OUTCOME. AMONG THE SCENARIOS THAT SOARES OUTLINED WAS ONE WHICH ANTICIPATES PORTUGAL'S ISOLATION AND MOUNTING ECONOMIC PROBLEMS BECAUSE OF REFUSAL OF SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC AID FROM THE COUNTRIES OF NORTHERN EUROPE AND THE U.S. THE GOAL WOULD BE TO USE PORTUGAL TO "IMMUNIZE" THE REST OF EUROPE.

(D) SOARES AGREED WITH THE VISITORS' VIEW THAT IT WAS MORE IN PSP'S INTEREST TO ALIGN ITSELF WITH NORTHERN EUROPEAN SOCIALISM THAN WITH MITTERRAND'S IDEA OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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ORGANIZING THE MEDITERRANEAN SOCIALIST PARTIES.

(E) PSP LEADERS AROUND SOARES ADMITTED THAT THE PSP HAD MADE TOO MANY CONCESSIONS IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS AND IT WILL BE AN UPHILL STRUGGLE TO RECOVER THE LOST GROUND.

(F) THE VISITORS WERE SURPRISED AND IMPRESSED BY THE DEGREE TO WHICH PORTUGUESE WORKERS AND COMMON PEOPLE ARE BEHIND THE PS AND ARE RESPONDING TO ITS APPEALS TO DRAW NOW THE LINE AND FIGHT COMMUNIST INFILTRATION AND SUBVERSION. THEY ADMITTED TO LABATT THAT THEY

WENT TO LISBON WITH SERIOUS DOUBTS WHETHER THE PS
HAD REAL ROOTS IN THE PORTUGUESE WORKING CLASS. THEY
CAME BACK CONVINCED .

(G) PSP AS WELL AS DEMOCRATIC LABOR LEADERS SPOKE

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WITH GREAT SATISFACTION OF THE FIRM STAND THE
SCANDINAVIAN UNIONS HAD TAKEN RECENTLY AGAINST
INTERSINDICAL AND HOPED THAT THE ICFTU AND THE INTER-
NATIONAL SECRETARIATS WILL FOLLOW THIS EXAMPLE.

(H) BLONDEL MORE THAN LAVAL CAME AWAY FROM LISBON WITH THE CONCLUSION THAT THE AFM IS "A FICTION," MEANING THAT IT HAS NO REAL ROOTS AND IS FAR FROM BEING REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MAIN STREAM OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(I) THE VISITORS ESTIMATE THAT 85 PERCENT OF THE PRESS AND MASS MEDIA IS CONTROLLED BY THE COMMUNISTS
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BUT THERE ARE SIGNS THAT THE PEOPLE HAVE HAD MORE THAN ENOUGH OF PCP PROPAGANDA.

2. BOTH LAVAL AND BLONDEL ARE EXPERIENCED OBSERVERS AND QUITE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT COMMUNIST TACTICS AND DIALECTICS. FROM PARIS VANTAGE POINT THEIR REMARKS CONCERNING SOARES' CALIBER AND HIS PESSIMISM ABOUT THE FUTURE, NOTWITHSTANDING THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE'S RESPONSE TO HIS APPEAL FOR A FIRM STAND ARE PERHAPS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT POINTS OF THEIR REPORT. IN THEIR PRESS CONFERENCE THEY AVOIDED ANY MENTION OF CONTACTS WITH SOARES AND GENERALLY THE PSP. THEY TOLD LABATT THAT THEY WERE CONCERNED LEST SOME JOURNALISTS DREW THE WRONG CONCLUSION THAT THEY HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH SOARES' DECISION TO QUIT THE GOP AND DIG HIS HEELS.
RUSH

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